GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1151
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2003
HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION
A.K. PREMAJAM

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the UNO consider Human Rights Education as a major component for the promotion of Human Rights; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken/contemplated by the Government at the various levels of education for the purpose?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT(DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA)

(a) The United Nations General Assembly through its Resolution 49/184 of 23rd December, 1994 resolved to declare the period 1995- 2004 as the UN Decade for Human Rights Education.

(b) The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights requested Member States to celebrate the Decade by drawingup a National Action Plan and implement the same. A Coordination Committee chaired by Home Secretary and consisting of Secretaries from other Ministries/Departments was set up for the purpose. This Committee has since approved a National Action Plan for Human Rights Education in India. The National Action Plan has been grouped under two categories - strategies for raising mass awareness and strategies for promoting social empowerment through attitudinal change and sensitizing specific target groups like police, security forces, students, judicial officers, etc. on Human Rights Values through Education and Training. The National Action Plan as approved by the Home Minister has been circulated to Ministries/Departments concerned for implementation. The Ministry of Home Affairs is the nodal Ministry in this regard. The items relating to Human Rights Education in Schools, Colleges and Universities, included in the National Action Plan are listed at Annex. These items are at various stages of implementation.

ANNEX
HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

(Action : Department of Education)

(i) Generating awareness and reach through media advocacy to the deprived and special target group of children that a Right to Basic Minimum Education is their human right.

(ii) Introduction of human rights issues in the school curricula, - at primary as well as at secondary level and preparation of appropriate course material for this purpose in a way to make it part of the students' all round development.

(iii) Devising a plan of action for training the teachers on human rights/values in collaboration with State Education Departments/ SCERTs/NCTE.

(iv) Introducing courses on Human Rights at the Undergraduate and post graduate level, including either a compulsory/special paper at under Graduate level.

(v) Introduction of short term / long term courses on human rights through the distance education programmes. IGNOU and other premier universities should be encouraged by UGC to take up these courses by liberally funding these courses.

(vi) There is a dearth of books as well as research material on human rights. Universities should, therefore, encourage research on human rights by liberally instituting scholarships and internships on issues pertaining to human rights.

(vii) To bridge the gap in the availability of research material on human rights a National Resource Centre for documentation, training, research and education in Human rights is to be set up in one of the premier Universities/research organisation under Ministry of HRD.

(viii) Gyan Darshan and Gyan Vani the dedicated video/audio channels for education under Prasar Bharati, AIR could be put to effective use for spreading human rights education.

(ix) Colleges and universities should be encouraged to hold seminars/workshops/debates on issues of human rights. Associations and unions in the colleges/Univ. could be given financial assistance for such activities. Project based learning should be encouraged. Assignments and field activities like data collection, event organisation, camp activities, social service events during distress situation etc. may be integrated into courses designing and performance evaluation.

(x) Bring out a booklet containing the basic instruments of Human Rights for public distribution.

(xi) As the subject of human rights is a matter of changing attitude, the audio visual medium of imparting education has better impact than the class room type of learning. Accordingly, more stress need be on preparation of course material in multimedia forms- like, videos, CDs and films in addition for mass propagation and mass education.

(xii) Dissemination of information on human rights should also be carried out through websites.